

Corey Woodby

From: Mark <renergynow@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2015 4:43 PM
To: Senate Majority Committee Clerks
Subject: SB 438

Dear Energy and Technology Committee Members:

As the owner of a solar installation company in Michigan, let me clearly put into perspective the business threat that I see from SB 438:

1. Solar sales are directly based on net metering. While utility incentives come and go, customers understand the simple concept of receiving the same price whether the meter is spinning forward or backward and thus, net metering drives our solar sales. Any bill that tampers with net metering will kill our solar sales and business. And we're not alone.
2. Thousands of jobs and millions of spending are at stake. When customers realize they won't get the same rate, they won't purchase solar and there will be fewer solar industry jobs. While solar is a feel good job creation story right now in Michigan, it won't be in the future if this bill passes. MI solar industry jobs aren't outsourced. We use MI labor, MI resources, and MI distributors for solar projects, and along with other installers, spend millions of dollars in MI *on* solar and *from* solar, which is threatened by this bill.
3. Changing net metering will change Michigan's energy portfolio to higher fossil fuel generation. Along with 44 other states, net metering in MI provides solar a foothold in an overwhelmingly lopsided fossil fuel generation portfolio. Earlier this year, Governor Snyder called for an increase in the state's RPS, asking us to "transition from the sources of yesterday to newer, cleaner methods" and net metering and a solid RPS work hand in hand to do this. SB 438 will stop this from happening.
4. Net metering is not the problem. While utilities argue that net metering customers cost them money, new studies show net metering policies allow utilities to manage their peak electricity loads and costs better during the day when solar performs best, and helps reduce grid strain and losses in long distance transmission by having generation close to the point of consumption. If net metering was the problem, large solar states like CA, AZ and CO, with much higher net metering customers than MI would have had higher costs passed onto non-solar ratepayers already.
5. Finally, the threat of this bill is already affecting our business. If the intent is to kill solar in MI, the threat of this bill is already having that effect. Prospective customers are already asking about whether they should purchase solar now if net metering is going to change in the future. This is already having a ripple effect in our company, and the people we support.

Michigan is a great state, but Senate Bill 438 is not great for the solar industry, not great for the thousands of jobs and millions of dollars spent here and not great for the State.

Sincerely,

Mark Hildebrandt

Sunventrix

